

Laura Villalobos
Assistant Professor in Economics
Salisbury University

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Citizenship: Costa Rican

Fields of Concentration:

Environmental & Climate Change Economics
Development Economics
Applied Econometrics
Impact Evaluation

Current position:

Assistant Professor
Department of Economics and Department of Environmental Studies
Salisbury University
Maryland, United States

Education:

Postdoctoral researcher
Inter-American Development Bank, 2017 – 2021
Climate Change and Sustainable Development Sector
Washington, D.C., United States

Graduate Studies

Ph.D. in Economics, 2012 – 2017
Department of Economics, Environmental Economics Unit, University of Gothenburg, Sweden
Dissertation Title: *Impact Evaluation of forest conservation policies and the effects of weather on school attendance*
Supervisors: Måns Söderbom (principal) & Jessica Coria
Opponent: Professor Carol Newman, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

Visiting Scholar

University of Cambridge, Jan – April 2016
Department of Land Economy & Cambridge Centre for Environment, Energy and Natural Resource Governance (C-EENRG)
Supervisor: Andreas Kontoleon

M.Sc. in Environmental Economics

Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), 2008 – 2009
Turrialba, Costa Rica
Thesis: “National parks’ effects on local communities’ wages and employment in Costa Rica”

B.A Economics

Grants, Honors and Awards:

Research Grant. Project: Adaptation mechanisms against negative effects of weather on human capital formation. Funded by the Environment for Development Initiative (EfD). 2019-2020. 60,000 USD.

SIDA academic capacity building program, grant for doctoral studies, 2012-2017

Adlerbertska Stipendiestiftelsen Travel Grants 2012 to 2016

Siamon Stiftelsen Travel Grant, 2014

Summa cum laude 2008 Class & Distinguished MSc. Dissertation. CATIE, 2009

Publications:

Use forests or lose them? Regulated timber extraction and tree cover loss in Mexico (2020) (with Allen Blackman) *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*, 8(1), 125-163.

Clear, but don't invest: protected areas discourage some land uses more than others (2019) (with Allen Blackman) *Environmental Research Letters*.

Forgetful or reluctant? Evidence on donor behavior from panel data (2018) (with Mette Trier Damgaard, and Christina Gravert) *Economics of Philanthropy* [Book chapter].

Has forest certification reduced forest degradation in Sweden? (2018) (with Jessica Coria and Anna Nordén) *Land Economics*, 94(2), 220-238.

Heterogeneous local spillovers from protected areas in Costa Rica (2017) (with Juan Robalino and Alex Pfaff) *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*, 4(3), 795-820.

Protected areas and economic welfare: an impact evaluation of national parks on local workers' wages in Costa Rica (2015) (with Juan Robalino) *Environment and Development Economics*, 20(3), 283-310.

Assessing the Impact of Institutional Design of Payments for Environmental Services (2012) (with Juan Robalino and Alex Pfaff) *Ecosystem Services from Agriculture and Agroforestry: Measurement and Payment*, 305. [Book chapter].

Work in progress:

Economic value of air quality improvements during COVID-19 lockdowns in Bogotá (with Allen Blackman and Jorge Bonilla)

Using forest natural infrastructure to improve water quality in Brazil and Ecuador: Evidence from the Water Funds Initiative (with Allen Blackman)

Has forest certification improved habitat quality for avian diversity in Sweden? (with Jessica Coria, and Ake Lindström)

Effects of weather on daily school attendance decisions and academic performance

Gone with the rain: Effects of abnormal precipitation on school dropout rate (with Juan Robalino and Lucía Contreras)

Mitigating the Impact of Heat on Learning: Evidence from Colombia (with Jorge García and Julián Gomez)

Research experience:

Research Assistant, Resources for the Future (RfF). Washington, D.C. Summer 2013.

Junior Research Fellow in Environmental Economics Field. Environment for Development Initiative (EfD-CA). Turrialba, Costa Rica. 2008-2012.

Research Assistant. Institute for Research in Economic Sciences (IICE). University of Costa Rica 2006-2007.

Research Assistant. Center of Economic and Environmental Studies (CIESA). Costa Rica. 2006.

Teaching and supervision experience:

Guest Lecturer. Environmental Policy Assessment and Evaluation (Masters Level). Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge. 2016.

Co-supervisor of Master theses in environmental economics, University of Cambridge & CATIE, 2016.

Teacher Assistant. Undergraduate thesis course, Gothenburg University, 2014.

Lecturer. Introductory Economics & Environmental Valuation (Masters Level, in Spanish). CATIE 2011.

Conference and Seminar Presentations:

Cambridge Centre for Environment, Energy and Natural Resource Governance (C-EENRG) (November, 2020)

Economics, Finance and Statistics , Jönköping International Business School (November, 2020)

6th Biannual Meeting of the Environment for Development (EfD) Forest Collaborative Initiative, Manchester, 2019.

12th Annual meeting of the Environment for Development Initiative (EfD). Hanoi, 2018.

6th World Congress of Environmental and Resource Economists (WCERE). Gothenburg, 2018

Department of Management and Engineering. Linköping University, 2017 (invited seminar).

Institute of Public Finance, University of Innsbruck, Austria, 2017 (invited seminar).

22nd EAERE Annual Conference, Zurich, 2016.

17th Annual BIOECON Conference, Cambridge, UK, 2015.

LACEEP 10+ Event Lomas de Santa Fe, Mexico City, 2015.

21st EAERE Annual Conference, Helsinki, Finland, 2015.

8th Annual Meeting. Environment for Development (EfD) Initiative. Tanzania, 2014.

5th World Congress of Environmental and Resource Economists (WCERE). Istanbul, 2014.

North America Congress for Conservation Biology (NACCB). Oakland, California, 2012.

19th EAERE Annual Conference, Prague, 2012.

Conference “Mind the Gap: From evidence to policy impact” Cuernavaca, Mexico, 2011.

Workshop “Midiendo la Deforestación Evitada: un enfoque de Políticas Públicas” Mexico, 2011.

Camp Resources XVII. North Carolina, 2010.

4th World Congress of Environmental and Resource Economists (WCERE). Montreal, 2010.

IV Congress of the Latin American and Caribbean Association of Environmental and Natural Resources Economists (ALEAR). Costa Rica, 2009.

Professional Affiliations:

Latin American Association of Environmental and Resources Economists (LAERE)

Environment for Development Initiative (EfD)

Referee services:

Journal of Environmental Economics and Management (JEEM); Environment and Development Economics (EDE); World Development (WD); Desarrollo y Sociedad, edited by the Universidad de los Andes, Colombia.

Technical Skills:

Data Analytics Tools: Stata, R, SQL, ArcGIS, QGIS

Other Software & Tools: LaTeX, Google Earth Engine, WaterWorld, InVEST, BenMAP-CE,

AirQ+

Languages:

Spanish (native), English (fluent), Portuguese (fluent), French (conversational)

Training Courses:

- Data Scientist with R (career track). Data Camp. 2019.
- Machine Learning for All. Inter-American Development Bank, 2019.
- Advanced Econometric Methods for Development Effectiveness by Jeffrey M. Woolridge. Inter-American Development Bank, 2018.
- Research Transparency and Reproducibility by Berkeley Initiative for Transparency in the Social Sciences (BITSS). Inter-American Development Bank, 2018.
- Research Methods in Sustainable Development. 6th Annual Alliance Graduate Summer School. Paris, 2017. Columbia University.
- Impact Evaluation. LACEEP. Turrialba, Costa Rica, 2011.
- Evaluating Social Programs Course. Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), MIT, 2014.
- Economics of ecosystem services and biodiversity. LACEEP, Turrialba, Costa Rica, 2011.
- Applying Game Theory and Behavioral Economics to the Environment. Beijer Institute of Ecological Economics. Montreal, 2010.
- Economic experiments applied to behavioral economics. EfD-CA, Turrialba, Costa Rica, 2009.
- Environmental economics with emphasis on the role of businesses on the environment and climate change issues. (LACEEP). Turrialba, Costa Rica. 2009.
- Elements of Analysis. University of Costa Rica, MSc. in Applied Mathematics, 2009.
- Global Positioning Systems related to information technology and applied to natural resources. National University of Costa Rica (UNA), Heredia, Costa Rica, 2008.
- Environmental Policy and Resource Economics. LACEEP, Turrialba, Costa Rica, 2008.

Policy-oriented research & media coverage:

- Special Report Contribution to: Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Humano Sostenible (2014). Efectividad de las políticas de conservación en Costa Rica. Capítulo 4 Armonía con la Naturaleza. With J. Robalino,
- La Nación, newspaper: “Vivir cerca de parque nacional potencia pago de trabajadores” November 19th, 2015. http://www.nacion.com/vivir/ambiente/Salario-vecinos-areas-protégidas-superior_0_1525247476.html.
- Robalino, J., Lang, G., Moraes, C., Sandoval, C., Vargas, L., Villalobos, L. (2014). Evaluación de Impacto del Distrito de Riego Arenal-Tempisque Región Chorotega, Costa Rica, 1981-2011. Strategic Public Evaluation (commissioned by the Costa Rican Ministry of Planning and Economic Policy, MIDEPLAN).
- Alpízar, Francisco; Robalino, Juan; Sandoval, Catalina; Villalobos, Laura. 2012. Local Effects of Payments for Environmental Services on Poverty. RFF Discussion Paper EfD 14-12 May 2014.
- Alpízar, F., Naranjo, M., Vargas, A., Villalobos, L., and Muñoz, C. (2011). Cost based pricing tool to estimate the cost of providing non-essential services in protected areas: Case Study National Park Corcovado and Marino Ballena. The Nature Conservancy, Costa Rica.
- Chacón, A., Naranjo, M., and Villalobos, L. (2011) Evaluation of the impacts of the Mesoamerican Agroenvironmental Program (MAP): constructing the baseline. Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE).
- Robalino, J. and Laura Villalobos (2009) Conservation and welfare: Effects of National Parks on local employment in Costa Rica. Paper elaborated for the Poverty-environment publication series of the UNEP-UNDP Initiative.

Non-academic activities:

- Rock climbing, hiking, yoga, lindy hop dancing, and Gamelan (traditional Indonesian music).

